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MICROSCOPICAL SOIRÉE.—The Soirée given at the Agricultural and Geological Rooms, under the able direction of Professor Cox, in Indianapolis, on the 30th of January, was largely attended by the most cultivated citizens of the place. Microscopes by Zentmayer, Bulloch, Beck, Hartnack, Grunow and others were in use, and the exhibition was made instructive as well as entertaining. The opening address was made by Professor Cox, and the objects were shown and explained by the various microscopists of the city.

NEW YORK MICROSCOPICAL SOCIETY.—This new society completed its organization by the adoption of a constitution on the 21st of December last. It will meet on the first and third Friday evenings of each month. The officers for the present year are as follows: J. D. Hyatt, president; G. I. Whitehead, vice-president; A. J. Swan, 176 William street, corresponding secretary; R. Hitchcock, recording secretary; W. C. Hubbard, treasurer; D. B. Scott, librarian and acting curator.

NATURE CLUB OF ALBANY.—At the annual election, January 14th, 1878, the following officers were elected: Dr. George T. Stevens, president; Dr. Willis G. Tucker, vice-president; Richard Prescott, secretary.

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SCIENTIFIC NEWS.

— The occurrence of the hundredth anniversary of the death of Linnæus, on the 10th of January last, gave occasion to all the scientific societies and institutions in Sweden, and to several others abroad, to arrange festive meetings in celebration of the day. The Swedish papers of the succeeding days were full of descriptions of these feasts, and we give our readers a short account of one of them, which was held at the old University of Upsala, the venerable *Alma Mater* of Swedish science for more than 400 years.

At eight o'clock in the morning the bells of the cathedral proclaimed in solemn strokes that the University was going to celebrate the memorial of her greatest son. At half-past eleven the bell-ringing sounded again, calling out the members of consistorium academicum, invited guests, "the supporters and friends of science," and the 1500 students of the University, to proceed from the University to the grand hall of the College, which for this occasion was profusely and tastefully decorated all around with fresh flowers and shields bearing inscriptions alluding to events in Linnæus's life. In the background was seen Linnæus's bust, mounted on a pedestal and crowned with a wreath of fresh laurel; it was surrounded with living Thuyas. Above this was seen Linnæus's coat of arms—in the centre a blue field with an egg (to illustrate his thesis "*Omne vivum ex ovo*"), and around this three fields, viz: one black, one green, and one red, representing the three kingdoms of nature, the mineral, the vegetal and the animal. These fields were surmounted by a helmet, out of which two cactus leaves protruded. A garland of *Linnæa borealis* was twisted round the whole crest. Opposite the background was seen, on the organ gallery, a ribbon with his motto, "*Innocue vivito, Numen adest.*" A considerable number of ladies in gala dresses added to the festive appearance of the hall. The chancellor of the University, Count H. Hamilton, the Archbishop, the Governor of Upland, the rector Manificus, and the prorector of the University had their seats next to the tribune. Next to them appeared some descendants of Linnæus, among them Dr. Tycho Tullberg, the zoölogist. The whole auditorium numbered about 1000.

The programme began with a cantata by Prof. Josephson, with words by Prof. Fr. Holmgren, of which elegantly printed copies were distributed among the auditors. Botanicus Professor Th. M. Fries then mounted the tribune and read the oration, in which he, with his usual eloquence and spirit, gave a sketch of Linnæus's immortal works as naturalist, physician and academical teacher, as well as of his private life. He pointed out how Linnæus's great genius was so much ahead of his time that many of the greatest questions of our days were already conceived by him, although not understood by his contemporaries and therefore forgotten, until in our days they have been taken up again. Even the theory of evolution was the object of his meditations, as has been proved in a newly recovered manuscript on this subject, where he called the monkeys "the cousins of man."

Humbolt has been called the originator of the geography of plants; to Goethe has been attributed the origin of the theory of metamorphoses in plants; but both were preceded by Linnæus, who in some of his works treated both those branches of botany. As mineralogist he proved to be far ahead of his time through his crystallographic discoveries. As physician he distinguished himself not only as a successful practitioner, but also as the author of many important medical papers e. gr. "Genera morborum," "Materia medica." He proved the value of applying electricity in certain cures. He pointed out the influence of certain microscopic organisms on the human body, etc. His genius and energy enabled him to complete an enormous amount of work. Only his private correspondence would have been enough for a man of less enormous capacity, and still nearly every letter of his is a scientific treatise of great value. It is well known how he once was cured from podagra by the arrival of Kalm's large collections from North America. To him the natural history was a "gaia scienzia," and it was at the same time a form of devotion to the Creator, free from all selfishness. He regarded himself as pontifex in the temple of Nature. "I have," so he says in his preface to Systema Naturæ, "I have seen the eternal, infinite, omniscient, omnipotent God. I have seen Him and been dumb with astonishment."

In the Royal Academy of Science in Stockholm, was gathered the same evening, an illustrious assembly of all that the Swedish capital has eminent in science. This Academy was founded by Linnæus and his friends. The festival oration was read by General Wede, the Præses of the Academy. King OSCAR read a telegraphic greeting in Latin from the German Academy of Science in Frankford on Main, and also his answer in the same language. Before the meeting was dissolved, the academy decreed an appropriation to a great-grand-daughter and a great-great-grand-daughter of Linnæus, both living in rather indigent circumstances.

To the great number of busts, medals and portraits of Linnæus, previously existing, have on this occasion been added a well executed copy of the portrait of Linnæus, at the age of 67, painted by Roslin, and a new medal by Mrs. Lea Ahlborn. The large statue of Linnæus for which contributions have been collected all over the country, on the invitation of the Academy of Science, had not yet been completed.—*J. Lindahl.*

— It is proposed to issue by subscription a catalogue of scientific serial publications in all languages, which has been prepared by Mr. Samuel H. Scudder, librarian of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and formerly librarian of the Boston Society of Natural History.

This work, which has double the extent of any existing list of the like kind, aims to include all transactions of societies and independent journals in every branch of natural, mathematical and physical science, excepting only the applied sciences—medicine, agriculture, technology, etc. The different institutions or periodicals are arranged under the towns in which they are established or published, and the towns follow an alphabetical order under their respective countries. Cross references are given wherever desirable. It will be printed in octavo, will extend to almost 300 pages, and will be delivered, bound in cloth, to subscribers at four dollars the copy. Other copies will be printed on one side of the leaf, to be cut up for catalogue use, and will be delivered in folded sheets at five dollars the copy.

Intending subscribers may address Justin Winsor, librarian of Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass.

— A third session of the Summer School of Biology of the Peabody Academy of Science, Salem, Mass., will open July 5th, and continue six weeks. Those desiring information regarding the course of instruction, etc., may apply to A. S. Packard, Jr., Director of the Peabody Academy of Science, Salem, Mass.

— An important work has just been issued by Hayden's U. S. Geological Survey of the Territories, entitled Contributions to the Fossil Flora of the Western Territories. Part II. By Leo Lesquereux, Washington, 1878. It forms Volume VII, of the quarto reports of Professor Hayden's Survey, and is a bulky volume of 366 pages and 65 plates. It is divided into three parts, of which the first treats of the Areal Distribution, the Stratigraphy of the Lignitic Formation, and its capacity for combustible mineral, and third, the age of the Lignitic, indicated by its Geological Distribution and its Fauna. The second Part contains the Descriptions of the Tertiary Fossil Plants, while the third comprises the following subjects: The Age of the Lignitic Formations determined by the characters of the Fossil Plants; a Table of the Distribution of Species, and a Table of the Distribution of the species of the Point of Rocks.

— Two distinguished entomologists have just been removed by death: T. Vernon Wallaston, born March 9, 1821, died in England suddenly, January 4th ult. He will be remembered for his elaborate work entitled *Insecta Maderensia*, and his little work On the Variations of Species, published in 1856.

Andrew Murray, born February 19, 1812, died in London, January 10th, 1878. His quarto volume on the geographical distribution of mammals, his monograph of the beetles of the *Sphæridiidæ*, and of the genera Cercyon and Catops, and his papers on the geographical distribution of beetles, are monuments to his memory.

Henry Lawson, M.D., died at Cork, October 4th. He was for many years the editor of the *Popular Science Review*, and conducted the *Monthly Microscopical Journal* from its commencement till his death, which has caused its discontinuance.

L. Pfeiffer died at Cassel, aged 72. His Nomenclator Botanicus was the most useful of his laborious compilations.

— One of the most important contributions to our knowledge of the marine fauna of the subarctic regions, is the famous Fauna Littoralis Norvegiæ, the second part of which appeared in 1856. The third part has lately been received in this country. It is a folio volume with sixteen plates, published at Bergen, in 1877, from an appropriation of 4000 crowns made by the National Assembly of Norway. The contents comprise the following chapters: New and little known Cœlenterates; New Echinoderms, by the late Michael Sars. The remaining chapters are by Professor

Koren and Dr. Danielssen, on the following subjects: Description of some new Norwegian Cœlenterates, Contributions to the Natural History of the Pennatulidæ living on the Norwegian coast; Description of new Bryozoa; Contributions to the Natural History of the Norwegian Gephyreæ. A new species of the genus Penella. Some of the plates are colored, and many anatomical details are given, making this part worthy of its distinguished predecessors.

— Dr. Peterman, of Gotha, in his "Geographical Notes" for November, calls Henry M. Stanley "the Bismarck of African exploration." As Bismarck united the various German principalities into one great empire, so Stanley, taking all previous African discoveries, scattered as they were and mixed up with conjectures, "with one masterly stroke united all these *disjecta membra*, wove the odds and ends of previous researches and efforts for thousands of years into one compact, valuable web." Thus he thinks that Stanley's work is unparalleled in the whole history of discovery in the world; and he proceeds to sustain the opinion by showing how Stanley transcended all that was previously known respecting the Congo river. This is lofty praise, but it comes from one whose competency to give it has never been questioned.

— Dr. Jared P. Kirtland, who died at East Rockport, Ohio, was a native of Wallingford, Ct., and was well known in this country for his attainments in natural history, and especially discoveries in conchology and ichthyology. In 1848 he was given charge of the natural history department in the survey of Ohio, and his works on the subject were published in Boston and elsewhere in the East. Important degrees were bestowed upon him by various Eastern and Western colleges, and honors were given by several societies for valuable scientific services. He was 84 years old at the time of his death.

— A letter just received from Prof. J. Schoetter, Secretary General of the "Congrès International des Américanistes," states that one volume of the proceedings of the interesting and successful meeting, held at Luxembourg on the 10–13 of September, 1877, would be issued about the first week of December. The second about the last of February, 1878. The next session will be held at Brussels in 1879, instead of in this country, as was at one time proposed.—*E. A. Barber.*

— The American Museum of Natural History in Manhattan Square, at Seventy-seventh street and Eighth avenue, was opened to the public December 22d, by President Hayes. It is a high, red brick building, with modified English-Gothic windows.

An eloquent address was delivered by President Elliott, of Harvard College, in which he is reported to have said:

"We are assembled here to view with gratitude the beneficent power of natural science, to praise and thank its votaries, and to dedicate this splendid structure to its service. The power to which we do homage is the accumulated intelligence of our race applied, generation after generation, to the study of nature, and this palace is the storehouse of the elaborated materials which that intelligence has garnered, ordered and illuminated. What has natural science done for mankind that it should be thus honored? Natural science has engendered a peculiar kind of human mind. The searching, open, humble mind, which, knowing that it cannot attain unto all truth, or even to much new truth, is yet patiently and enthusiastically devoted to the pursuit of such little new truth as is within its grasp, having no other end than to learn, prizing, above all things, accuracy, thoroughness and candor in research, proud and happy, not in its own strength, but in the might of that host of students whose past conquests make up the wondrous sum of present knowledge, whose sure future triumphs each humblest worker in imagination shares. It has been reserved for natural science in this generation to demonstrate the universality of hereditary transmission and its controlling influence upon the families, nations and races of men, as well as upon all lower orders of animate beings. It is fitting that natural history should have given this demonstration to the world, for the basis of systematic natural history is the idea of species, and the idea of species is itself founded upon the sureness of hereditary transmission upon the ultimate fact that individual characteristics are hereditable. As the knowledge of heredity recently acquired by science permeates society it will profoundly affect social customs, public legislation and governmental action. It will throw additional safeguards around the domestic relations, enhance the natural interest in vigorous family stocks, guide wisely the charitable action of the community, give a rational basis for penal legislation, and promote both the occasional production of illustrious men and the gradual improvement of the masses of mankind. These moral benefits will surely flow from our generation's study of heredity. Modern science has exalted the idea of God, the greatest service which can be rendered to humanity." After Prof. Marsh, President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, had delivered a brief address, President Hayes was introduced by President Stuart. The President said: "Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—Without introduction I now perform the honorable but brief and simple duty assigned to me at the opening of this enterprise, so noble, so valuable and so splendid, which the country owes to the enlightened liberty of the city and the citizens of New York. And I now declare that the opening ceremonies have been completed; that the American Museum of Natural History is now open."

The building has been built by the city of New York, while the fine collections in it have been purchased by private subscriptions. Each hall is 170 feet long by 60 wide, inside the walls. The lowest story is 18 feet high; the second, or principal story, including the gallery is 30 feet; the upper story 22 feet, and the Mansard story 16 feet in height.

— On the 21st of May, 1877, fourteen carp, only three of which were old enough to spawn this season, were placed in a pond near the residence of Henry Parsons, three miles from this city. On the 10th of October, following, the pond was drawn off, and the original fourteen carp, much grown and in a fine condition and healthy, together with their increase of 1408 young and vigorous fish, were taken out and placed in a breeding pond for next year.

— A Sea Lion and Sturgeon in Combat. In San Francisco bay the angler sometimes hooks a salmon that has had a piece bitten out of the shoulder by the rapacious seal, and certainly the seal lives by masticating fish in whole or part. Recently the passengers on the 10 o'clock, A. M. boat from Oakland, witnessed a tough fight between a sturgeon and a sea lion. The seal bit viciously at the gill openings of its adversary, and showed superior finesse in planning the campaign, while the sturgeon lashed the water powerfully with its unequally lobed tail, and occasionally administered a stunning blow to the seal. Blood flowed profusely and the water was dyed for yards around, but eventually the sturgeon yielded up the ghost, being seized unluckily by the tail and paralyzed in movement by having its only propeller nearly bitten off. Thus wounded and circumvented, it speedily desisted from the battle, and the seal administered the *coup de grace*, and towed his dinner beneath the waves. The spectacle was an exciting one.—*San Francisco Paper.*

— A new species of Chimæra has recently been captured on the Banks. This is the first occasion of this interesting fish so low down the American coast, though a species occurs in British waters.

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PROCEEDINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

California Academy of Sciences, December 17th.—Dr. H. Behr read an interesting paper giving the results of his experiments on the resistance of some species of Eucalyptus to ignition. Whether all the Eucalypti share in this peculiar power of resisting fire, has not been ascertained. His observations had been chiefly directed to the *Eucalyptus rostrata* in Australia, where he had often seen it flourishing in burnt tracts where every other tree had been consumed. He attributed this peculiar property of the